

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed on May 23, 2007, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration. Claim(s) 1-35 are now pending in this Application. Claims 1, 15-16 and 31-35 are independent claims and the remaining claims are dependent claims. In this Amendment, claims 1, 5, 15-16, 31-35 have been amended and claims 2 and 27 have been canceled. Applicants believe that the claims as presented are in condition for allowance. A notice to this affect is respectfully requested.

Claim 5 has been rejected under **35 U.S.C. §112** for antecedent support reasons. Claim 5 has been amended accordingly. Further, Claim 33 has been amended to clarify the nature of the program code to which it pertains.

Claim(s) 1-35 are rejected under **35 U.S.C. §103** as being obvious over Gao, U.S. Patent No. 6,581,094 (hereinafter Gao '094) in view of Baldwin, U.S. Publication No. 2003/0154271 (hereinafter Baldwin '271).

The present claims teach device specific access data stored at a central repository, and transmitted to individual agents for selective access to the respective device. Gao teaches a device specific UDD file 98 (col. 4, lines 50-54) which is distributed on the respective digital devices 90 (Fig. 1). The claimed invention specifically avoids distributed access data and the corresponding vulnerabilities caused by storing sensitive information such as passwords at different locations around the network (page 4, lines 21-29). Accordingly, Claim 1 has been amended with the subject matter of claim 2 to recite prior to retrieving the access data, storing the access data in the repository, the repository being a secure repository, and the access data omitted from persistent storage in a local datastore of a computer system operating the agents, a feature not shown or recited by Gao '094 or Baldwin '271, alone or in combination, to further clarify and distinguish over the cited art of record.

The Office action suggests that Baldwin '271, in conjunction with Gao '094, teaches the subject matter of claim 1. Baldwin '271, however, while disclosing ongoing SAN management via agents, does not show, teach, or

disclose the claimed discovery message TO an agent and the responsive manageable entity list FROM the agent indicating the manageable entities (i.e. arrays, switches, hosts) that are manageable by that agent. Thus, while the Baldwin '271 application may disclose ongoing data gathering by a SAN agent (paragraphs [0019-0022], the Baldwin '271 system does not show, teach or disclose startup activity such as the manageable entity list message operable for determining assignment of management responsibility to the agent for at least one manageable entity of the manageable entities indicated in the manageable entity list message, as recited in claim 1. Baldwin '271 makes no mention of startup or load balancing of agents. Therefore, the Baldwin '271 operations occur after startup for data gathering, not during startup for computing optimal load balancing (i.e. assigning agents to an optimal set of manageable entities).

The Office Action further suggests that Gao teaches the subject matter of claim 2 at Col. 4, lines 4-5. However, Gao specifically shows the device specific UDD file 98 in the corresponding device 90 distributed across the network 34. In contrast, the claimed invention is directed specifically to centralized storage of access data; the problem solved by the present invention is the vulnerability of distributed device specific information. Thus, Gao '094 explicitly teaches away from the invention of claim 2 because Gao teaches distributed device specific files, while the present invention solves the problem of sensitive device specific information stored in a distributed manner by centralizing the access data in the claimed central repository, as discussed at page 5, line 24-page 6 line 5.

Therefore, one of skill in the art would not look to Baldwin '271 to modify Gao '094 because Baldwin '271 suggests no motivation to combine with Gao because the Baldwin system shows post startup activities of gathering status, attributes and other such information regarding the hosts, storage devices, and interconnect fabric [0187], not pre-startup disposition of the set distributed UDD files. Further, even if one were to combine Baldwin '271 with Gao '094 the present claims would not be realized because the claimed access data is stored in the repository, not distributed over multiple UDD files.

By way of further distinction, the present application pertains to agent startup of different types of agents in a storage area network (SAN). In the SAN, each of the agents has a type of manageable entity (SAN entity) that is operable to manage, such as a storage array, switch, and host, to name several, discussed further at page 3, lines 22-30. Accordingly, claim 16 has been amended with the subject matter of claim 27, as disclosed at page 19, lines 15-29, to further clarify applicant's claimed invention. Accordingly, amended claim 16 is submitted as allowable because Gao does not show, teach or disclose that the access data manager [is] further operable to: index, via the type of the manageable entity, into a manageable entity type parameter store; retrieve the access data corresponding to the type of manageable entity; and generate the discovery message from the retrieved access data, as recited in amended claim 16.

Independent claims 15 and 31-35 recite features similar to claims 1 and 16, discussed above, and have been rejected on similar grounds. Claim 15, 32 and 35 have been amended similarly to claim 1, and claim 31 has been amended similarly to claim 16. Claims 33 and 34 have been amended with features from both amended claims 1 and 16, reciting subject matter formerly of claims 2 and 27, to further distinguish salient features of applicant's claimed invention.

In particular, claim 35 clarifies applicant's particularly distinguishing feature of identifying the security sensitive access data and associated processing.

Applicant(s) hereby petition(s) for any extension of time which is required to maintain the pendency of this case. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 50-3735.

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If the enclosed papers or fees are considered incomplete, the Patent Office is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned collect at (508) 616-9660, in Westborough, Massachusetts.

Respectfully submitted,

/CJL/

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